



The Sermon

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Psalm 1

"The Most Important Psalm"

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TRANSCRIPT

So, if you would, take your Bible and turn with me to the book of Psalms. If you're having trouble finding it, open your Bible to the middle, okay, and that's the book of Psalms. And today we're going to be looking at Psalm 1, and the title of this is "The Most Important Psalm." Now, Mark Becker, during the elders' prayer time, said to me, "Is this the most important psalm just because you're preaching it?" and I said, "Well, no; I want to make my case for why it is." Though I think every preacher thinks that whatever his passage is, that is the greatest passage. His heart is just married to that passage.

So, I want to begin by reading Psalm 1. And this is God's word, it begins in verse 1: "How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish." This is the reading of God's word. Let us go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, thank You for this psalm. Thank You for the truth that is found in it. I pray that You would plant this truth even more deeply into our hearts and souls, sharpen our understanding of matters concerning Your kingdom. I pray that You would bless my brothers and sisters here today. Lay Your hand upon me for good. Fill me with Your Spirit, that I might be an instrument You could use in this hour. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. [End]

I'm calling this first psalm the most important psalm, because I truly believe that it is. It is the first psalm, not because it's the first to be written. The Psalms are not arranged in chronological order. Psalm 1 was not the first psalm to be written, Psalm 150 is not the last psalm to be written. There is a purposeful sequence and progression of how the psalms are placed in the order in which they're found.

The book of Psalms was written over a period of 1,000 years. The first psalm to be written is Psalm 90. It was written by Moses during the wilderness wanderings, and that would be 1400 BC plus some years. The last psalm to be written is Psalm 126, which was written around 400 BC. And so you can see that there is a span of 1,000 years and some change from the first psalm to the last psalm to be written. It is a book that required 1,000 years. It is also put together by a group of men, groups of men who were not the authors. They were an editorial committee of those who gathered these psalms and began to place them in the sequence and in the order in which they are found.

When the book of Psalms was first compiled, there were only 41 psalms. You will note in your Bible right above where it says, "Psalm 1," do you see Book One? Book One was the first gathering of the first psalms, and that's all there were. Then Psalm 42 to 72 was compiled, and then Psalm 90 and following was compiled, et cetera. So it was in five different installments over a period of 600 years.

Psalm 1 is intentionally placed here, not by happenstance, not because it was first to be written, but I believe because it is the most important of all

the psalms, and the whole rest of the book of the Psalter really is just an extension of Psalm 1 and a flowing out of Psalm 1. In fact, Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 actually really stand together. I'll draw this to your attention.

At the beginning of Psalm 1:1 it begins, "How blessed is the man." You'll note how Psalm 2 concludes, "How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!" That's a literary device known as inclusio, or inclusion. That's like brackets or bookends that put these two psalms together such that whenever you enter into the book of Psalms you have to go through these two guards, if you will, that lead into the book of Psalms.

Psalm 1 says there are only two roads in life: there is the way of the righteous and there is the way of the wicked. And Psalm 2 is a warning to those who are on the way of the wicked, and it is a summons to come kiss the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and bow before Him. The book of Psalms was really compiled initially to be the hymnal in Solomon's temple, such that they would have these psalms to sing in public worship, because it took so long to put this together; and Solomon's temple was eventually destroyed, and they rebuilt the temple, a smaller one; they continued to compile these psalms to be sung in the second temple. But as people would come into the house of God to worship, this psalm was to be a reminder to everyone, "Which road are you traveling? What path are you on?" because there's only two paths in life: there is the path of the righteous and there is the path of the wicked, and everyone who comes to the public worship service must examine themselves and determine, "Which path am I on?"

And so as we look at this today, that is the issue that is put before you and me and each and every one of us here today: "Are you on the path of the righteous? Are you certain that you're on the path of the righteous?" because there's only one other path, and it is headed to destruction. So this first psalm is to be edifying to saints, and it is to be evangelistic to unbelievers. It's a very black and white psalm, there's no gray in this psalm.

So as we look at this psalm, what you'll notice, still just by way of introduction, verses 1-3 is the way of the righteous; verses 4-6 is the way of

the unrighteous or the wicked. So I want to walk through this psalm with you. It's my favorite psalm. I think it's the most important psalm. If you know only one psalm, I believe this is a psalm that you should know well. So as we look at this, I have several headings I want to set in front of you as always, and I want you to note, first, "The pronouncement of blessing."

Notice how this psalm begins: "How blessed is the man." We could say, "How blessed is the woman." No book in the Bible starts more positively than does the book of Psalms. It begins with this announcement and proclamation of blessing upon a certain man, and this man and this woman is the believer in God and the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Several things to be said from these first five words, "How blessed is the man." The first implication is God Himself is the blesser. There is no blessing to come into our lives other than the blessing that comes from God. God is the source of all blessings. God is the giver of all blessings. If you are to be blessed today, this blessing will come from above, not from around you and not from within, it will come from above. James 1:17 says, "Every good gift, every perfect gift comes down from God above, from the Father of unshifting shadows, with whom there is no variation."

The second thing for us to note is - and it doesn't really come through in the English - but how "blessed" is in the plural. And it could be better translated, "O the blessednesses, the abundance of blessing." These blessings are not being measured out with an eyedropper and just every once in a while we get a little drop of blessing here and there. No, it's as if there is a deluge of blessing that is being poured out upon us. It really is what Jesus had to say in John 10:10, "I've come that you might have life, and have it abundantly." That is to say God's blessing on your life far exceeds whatever need it is that you have. It is an abundance of blessing.

The next thing I need to tell you about, "How blessed is the man," is, really, the meaning of this word "blessed." It has a twofold meaning; there's a primary meaning and a secondary meaning. The primary meaning of this blessedness is a right standing with God. It is to be what the apostle Paul

would call "to be justified by faith." It is the saving grace of God. There are only two kinds of people in the world: there are those who are blessed and there are those who are cursed; and everyone who is outside of the Lord Jesus Christ and everyone who is on the way of the wicked is cursed, and the wrath of God abides on them. And everyone who is on the way of the righteous is blessed with the grace, the saving grace of God, with the favor of God. Everyone who is blessed has been forgiven of their sins.; they have been clothed with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. So that's the primary meaning of blessed, that you stand in right favor with God in heaven through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

The secondary meaning is to have joy, and to have peace that accompanies the saving grace of God. This joy follows all who are on the way of the righteous. It is a contentment in life in the midst of all the circumstances. It is a peace that surpasses all comprehension. It is a bliss that comes only from God.

The next thing I need to tell you about, "How blessed is the man," - the whole sermon may be just these first five words here, but I want you to see what's being said here. This blessedness is not dependent upon your circumstances, happiness is dependent upon your circumstances; and when your happenings are good, you're happy. If your football team wins, you're happy. You don't have to be saved to be happy. There are people in the world, they go to parties, they go buy something, they meet someone, they get married, they get an education, they move into a house; they can be happy, and it's entirely dependent upon their circumstances. But take away the house, take away the job, take away their health, and they're no longer happy.

But this blessedness that is being pronounced here is not found in your circumstances, it is found in your relationship with God and through the Lord Jesus Christ; and He never changes. I mean, God is above your circumstances. He transcends all that is going on in the world that might take away happiness, but your joy is dependent upon your walk with the Lord and the Lord living inside of you. So all around you, everything may

be falling apart; but nevertheless, you may still have peace that surpasses all comprehension.

And I find it very interesting that this is so important, that the greatest sermon that's ever been preached in the history of the world was preached by the Lord Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount that begins in Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." Even Christ's first public sermon comes flowing out of Psalm 1. And even at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who find it." That's also an echo of Psalm 1.

So as this psalm begins, "How blessed is the man," there is no greater life that anyone could ever live than to experience this blessedness. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, this is your life. You are blessed among all others who do not know the Lord. And this should be an encouragement to you here today, because some of us here today are going through extreme circumstances that involve trials and tribulations, and you need to know that even in the midst of your difficulty, you are blessed by God, you are wonderfully blessed by God. So that's number one, "The pronouncement of blessing."

The second thing I want you to see is, "The path of blessing." For he goes on to say and describe the path of the righteous, and as he does – whoever is the author of this psalm is a master teacher. He knows how to articulate the point that he is making and he does it in a way in which there is – and you've heard me say this before – but there is negative denial and positive assertion; negative denial, positive assertion. And he will begin with three negatives in verse 1, and then he will move to two positives in verse 2, and these are the heads and tails of the same coin.

So, I want to call this negative denial in verse 1, I want to call it a negative separation, a negative separation. There has to be this separation in your life to fully experience this blessedness.

So, he begins by saying, "How blessed is the man who does not," - that's a negative - "who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers." Those three consecutive "nots." When something's repeated three times, especially in the Old Testament, it raises something to the superlative degree, like, "Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holier, holiest." And so this is a very strong statement that there must be in your life a separation from, first, worldly thinking and worldly ideologies. He says, "who does not walk in the council of the wicked." The blessed man, the blessed woman, refuses worldly thinking, and refuses secular ideology and philosophy and worldview. You cannot buy into it one millisecond, you must absolutely reject it and refuse it.

The second thing he says is, "nor stand in the path of sinners," and there's a progression here from walking now to standing, and you cannot become sucked in by the counsel of the wicked to bring you to a halt where you stand now in the path of sinners. And to stand in the path of sinners means that you've joined in with their sinful activities, you've bought into their thinking, and now you are a part of their doing. And he says here that, "the blessed man, the blessed woman, must not stand in the path of sinners."

And then he progresses, "nor sit in the seat of scoffers." And the progression continues from walking to standing, now you're having a meal with them. I mean, now you're sitting at the table with them. Now you're laughing at their jokes. Now you're engaging at a worldly level with them and finding way too much common ground. And so the blessed man, the blessed woman, does not sit in the seat of scoffers. Now we are to evangelize the lost, and we are to go to them where they are; but if they are scoffing God and blaspheming God, we're not sitting at the table to hear this, we're not casting pearls before swine. And so the blessed man does not sit in the seat scoffers.

So when we put all this together what we see is there has to be a firewall between us and the world. And this is an old-fashioned word, it's a Bible word, but it sounds so old-fashioned; it's the word "separation." We are to live a separated life; and we need to recover this truth. You will never know the fullness of blessing in your life if you love the world and the things that are in the world; and the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, if that takes root in your heart, you'll not lose your salvation, but you will lose your joy, and you will lose your peace. So there has to be this firewall between us and all of this in the world. We are to be in the world, but not of the world. So we must refuse to adopt their thinking, we must refuse to embrace their values, we must refuse to enter their path, we must refuse to sit in their seat, we must refuse to laugh at their jokes; that's off limits for us. This Psalm begins with a great positive, "How blessed is the man," followed up with a great negative, "who does not, who does not, who does not."

Now he comes to the positive in verse 2. With this negative separation there needs to be a positive saturation to be saturated with the word of God. And so he says in verse 2, "but his delight is in the law of the LORD." The word "but" signals a sharp contrast with the counsel of the wicked, and his delight is in the law of the LORD. The word of God is not drudgery to him, it is a delight to him, and he has a new heart, and he has new affections and new loves and new desires, and he loves the word of God, this blessed man. He is most filled with joy when he is most filled with the law of the LORD. He is most filled with peace when he is most filled with the written word of God.

And so he says, "but his delight is," present tense verb there, meaning it's a continual practice. His delight is always in the law of the LORD. Now the word "law" here refers to more than just the Mosaic law, it refers to the totality of divine revelation that is in God's word. It's the Hebrew word Torah and it means divine instruction in God's will. And as more books in the Bible would be written and would be added to the book of Psalms, it would be included in this.



"His delight is in the law of the LORD," because it feeds him, it nourishes him, it satisfies him, it brings him greatest pleasure, it stimulates his mind and his thinking, it invigorates his heart and his soul. Everything about the word just revives him and replenishes him. And then he says, "and in His law he meditates." This word "meditates" is hard to translate into the English, and literally out of the Hebrew it means a low sound. It means kind of a mumbling, kind of like this "Mmm. Mmm." I was praying with the elders before the 8:00 service, and as Matt Heidelbaugh was praying - it was a great prayer - I just found myself as he was praying just, "Mmm. Mmm."

And originally the word was used of a cow or cattle in a field eating the grass and has a cud of grass in them in the mouth and just chewing on it, and just chewing and sucking the juice out of the cud, and the cow would make the, "Mmm, mmm," and just drawing pleasure from it. That's the idea here, that we're chewing on the word of God. We do more than love it and desire it, we internalize it, and we apply it, and we want to live it, and there is a turning it over and over and over in our mind, and we are constantly thinking about the passages that we have recently been reading or sermons that we have heard. And that's what the word "meditate" really conveys, that our mind is set upon the word of God throughout the day and we draw strength from it.

So this is the path of blessing. If you only have the negative separation without being saturated with the word of God, you will become legalistic. It's everything you don't do. You know, if a good Christian doesn't drink, doesn't smoke, and doesn't go with girls who do, then your dog is the best Christian I know, because your dog doesn't do any of those things. So if it's only a negative separation, you're just going to end up with a bunch of rules that probably aren't even in the Bible.

On the other hand, if there's no negative separation and there's only the positive saturation, you're going to be what can be called an antinomian, which means against the law or without the law. So for you, obedience to the word of God is really negotiable, and, "I'll do it if it's convenient." So you've got to have - just like an airplane has to have two wings in order to

fly, and just like I need two legs in order to stand. So there has to be these two aspects in the Christian life: the negative, and the positive. And that's taught throughout the entire Bible.

When you come to the book of Ephesians, for example, it says, "You've got to take off the old man and put on the new man." If all you do is just take off the old man, that's not going to get you anywhere; and if all you do is just put on the new man but you never take off the old man, I mean you're just putting paint on an old fence. So you've got to have both aspects as you live your Christian life. It's not either/or, it's both/and.

So, today are you consciously aware that there needs to be this separation in your Christian life from worldly thinking and worldly activities that actually are sinful in and of themselves? And are you aware that you must delight in the law of the Lord, and meditate, and saturate your soul with it? This is the path of blessing. And as you are able to do both of those, you will experience greater joy, greater peace, greater patience, greater contentment, greater self-control, all of greater love, all of the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit.

Now let's proceed. Verse 3, I want to call this, "The picture of blessing." And this psalmist, whoever he is, as I've said, is a master teacher and he understands the value of a word picture, he understands the value of an illustration. He doesn't just teach us the truth, he shows us the truth. And so he's going to paint a picture now on the canvas of our minds so that we can see what this blessed life looks like. And I want to say this: if you're a Christian, this is your life. Whether you've been saved for a year, a decade, or half a century, this is your life; this is you, okay. So, this picture of blessing.

So, here we go: "He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water." Please note there's a note of certainty about this. It's not he could be a tree, should be a tree, would be a tree. No, he will be. This is a statement of fact in your life as a Christian. "You will be like" – that a figure of speech

known as simile - "you will be like a tree" - that's growing, that's alive - "firmly planted by streams of water."

Now two things I need to tell you about this tree. Number one, it's been transplanted. It's now planted by streams of water. It didn't start there, it was existing someplace else; and by implication, it started out in a desert where there was no water, it started out in a barren wasteland out in the middle of just nowhere. And this barren bush that had no leaves, that had no fruit, was just dead, someone came along and uprooted it and carried it to a totally different place, and dug a hole and planted it firmly next to streams of water. And what this is is a vivid picture of the new birth, because that's what happens when you're born again.

Before you were born again you were spiritually dead in trespasses and sin, Ephesians 2:1; and God by the Holy Spirit came and just uprooted you. And here's the thing about bushes: they cannot uproot themselves and the roots cannot just walk across the terrain to get over by the streams of water, and it shows that the new birth, regeneration, is a sovereign regeneration, that God by His Spirit came and uprooted you from the evil world system and the kingdom of darkness - that's where we once lived - and has now brought us to a new realm, to a new sphere, to a new location, to a new place, and has now firmly planted us right next to streams of water, and we've come alive. We have a life now that we never had before.

And you'll notice that, "we have been firmly planted" - notice - "by streams" - plural - "of water." There's more water in these streams than your little tree will ever be able to pull up through the roots into your branches. It speaks of the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit, and the sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the sufficiency of Scripture. You have been plugged into everything you need to thrive as a Christian. And you could be in the midst of the most difficult circumstance of life; but nevertheless, you are still firmly planted by streams of water, and you cannot just survive, you can thrive. So, it's transplanted - that's what God's done in your life - and now thriving.

Please note what it says in verse 3, "by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season." Speaks of its productivity, prolific spiritual growth, that there is constantly fruit that is being produced in in your life: the fruit of holiness, the fruit of godliness, the fruit of Christlikeness. And "in its season" means that there are certain times in your life where there needs to be more of this fruit, because you're in a difficult situation perhaps. And so you need more patience, or you need more self-control; you have streams of water that are more than sufficient to produce the fruit in your life that is needed for that season of your life.

And then he adds, "and its leaf does not wither." This is an evergreen tree. This is a tree that never sheds its leaves. There is a perennial nature about this tree; it's just always vibrant and green and lush and healthy and, really, unchanging. Even when you're going through tough times you, nevertheless, have a supernatural, God-given capacity to make it and to thrive.

And so he then adds at the end of verse 3, "and in whatever he does," – that covers the whole field, that's a pretty wide spectrum: whether at work, whether at home, whether at school, whether with friends – "in whatever he does, he prospers." Wow, this man is really blessed, is he not? Now this is not teaching prosperity gospel. The word "prosper" here means to fulfill or to accomplish the purpose for which you were created. And this is prosperity by God's definition, success by God's definition.

And so, you may be in a family where you're the only Christian. You may be in an office where you're the only Christian. You may be in a school and in your class you're the only Christian, and everyone else, quite frankly, is just dying on the vine; you can be thriving. You're not dying in days of drought, because you have an underground source. As those roots are being extended into the streams of water, you are growing taller, you are bearing more fruit, you are spreading your branches, you're deepening your roots, you are maintaining your leaves. This is your life. This is your Christian life. This is just the normal Christian life. This isn't some upper-level thing that you have to get to, this is your Christian life. It is prolific; it is prosperous; it is pleasurable.

So, you may be a widow all alone, and you're thriving. You may be a single adult all alone, you're thriving. You may be a single parent all alone with some challenging children; you're still thriving, because you're plugged into God and His grace and His strength. These streams of water far exceed what little needs you have.

So finally, as we come to verses 4-6, I want you to see, "The prohibition of blessing," because there's a stark contrast now beginning in verse 4, and he says, "The wicked are not so." We've already met the wicked in verse 1, "does not walk in the counsel of the wicked," and we will see the wicked again at the end of verse 6, "The way of the wicked will perish." "The wicked" here represents every unbeliever, everyone who's still out in the desert, a dead bush, everyone who's never been transplanted by regeneration and firmly planted by streams of water.

"The wicked or not so." And in the wording of the original Hebrew as this was written, it reads this way: "not so the wicked." And the "not so" receives the emphasis as the psalmist wrote this. It's like the psalmist is taking a yellow highlighter and highlighting those two words "not so" and then drawing a line under it and a circle around it and then an arrow to it, to draw our attention to it. It's intended to have a dramatic effect. "Not so the wicked."

So, are the wicked blessed? Not so. Are the wicked joyful? Not so. Are the wicked fruitful, do they prosper? Not so. Now, they may look successful on the outside. They may be living in a bigger house than you live in, they may have a newer car, they may have a better job. They may look like they are prospering on the outside, but I want to tell you, they are dying on the inside, if they do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. "Not so the wicked." In fact, these wicked, they actually walk in the council of the wicked, they actually stand in the path of sinners, and they actually sit in the seat of scoffers; that's what they do.

Now here's the picture: "but they are like chaff which the wind drives away." Now I was born in the city, so I had to look this up. And in this day

and time, a man would own a piece of land and he would plant for grain, and there would be a grain harvest; and he would go out in the field during harvest time and he would bring in his crop. And because its grain, he needs to separate the kernel from the chaff. The kernel is of great value, the chaff has zero value; so the way to make this separation, he finds the highest hill on his piece of land, because that's where the wind will blow the strongest. And so he will build a threshing floor. He will lay down stones at the very highest point, and he would take what would be the equivalent of a pitchfork and he would just toss the wheat up in the air; and the wind is blowing, and the wind makes the separation; and the heavier kernel, the heavier part of the grain that's valuable, it just comes straight down, because it weighs more. But the chaff, it's a lightweight, it has no substance to it, and the wind just blows it to the four corners of his property; and he will gather up the kernel and take it to market and provide for his family. But the chaff, zero value. I mean at best, we can just burn it and get it out of the way.

And so what he saying here is that there's coming a day of separation. There's coming a judgment at the end of the age and it's going to be a separation of the tares from the wheat, and the kernel from the chaff, and the wind of God's judgment is going to blow; and those who are on the way of the wicked will be separated, they'll be blown away into the bowels of hell below and be burned, because they have zero value to the kingdom of God. In fact, they're in the way. They are only good to be burned eternally forever. And that day's coming; and on that day, unsaved husbands will be blown away from a believing wife, and believing husbands will be separated from unbelieving wives, and there will be children that will be swept away from their parents on the last day if they are not walking the way of the righteous and have not been regenerated and born again. That's what the psalmist is saying.

S then, verse 5, "Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment." Oh, they will stand in appearance, they will just not stand in approval, and they will not be found to be in Christ, and they will be swept away once they stand at the judgment, and they will hear from the Lord Jesus Christ, "Depart from Me, you who work iniquity; I never knew you." So the wicked will not stand in the judgment. They have no standing in grace. They have no standing in forgiveness. They have no standing in imputed righteousness.

And then he adds in verse 5, "nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous." Now presently, they're in the assembly of the righteous. They come to the temple like everyone else comes to the temple, and they sing the same psalms, then they hear the same prayers, and they hear the same exposition of the law; they're in the assembly of the righteous. But the time is coming when they will be taken away from the assembly of the righteous. Now they live together, sing together, study together, pray together; but they do not know the Lord, and they will be separated from the assembly of the righteous.

That is a terrifying thought, is it not, that you can come to church and you can come to the public worship service but yet not be on the way of the righteous. And you could even be self-deceived and not know that you're not on the way of the righteous; and unknown to you, you're still on the way of the wicked. And when that wind blows, you think you will end up in heaven, and you will end up below.

So, verse 6 brings this all to conclusion. Verse 6 begins with the word "for," which introduces an explanation of what has preceded. So this is really kind of like the bottom line summation of this psalm. "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous." This means far more than God intellectually knows the way of the righteous, because God intellectually knows the way of the unrighteous. God knows everything.

This word "knows" actually means to have an intimate, personal love relationship with someone. And it means that God is intimately involved in a loving way, a way of grace with those who are on the way of the righteous. And God even is intimately involved not only with the righteous, but the way of the righteous, because He is the one, God is the one who planned it, God is the one who prepared it, God is the one who has led them on to it, God is the one who accompanies them as they go the way of the righteous. This is to say the Lord is with us every step of the way of the righteous. He's intimately, personally involved in our lives, "but the way of the wicked will perish." It means to undergo eternal punishment. It means

to undergo endless destruction, to be ever dying, yet never dying. The word "perish" does not mean annihilation, it means destruction.

The Bible tells it like it is, and so this psalm ends on a rather sobering note; but it is intended to have a positive effect, that the one who is on the way of the wicked would be awakened to what is before them and be sobered and enter through the narrow gate in order to be on the way of the righteous. And so it's really the most loving thing that the psalmist can do is to try to get the attention of the one who is on the way of the wicked. So the way of the wicked will perish, will be subjected to eternal destruction; the place where the worm never burns, never dies; the place of outer darkness, the furnace of fire, the lake of fire and brimstone. It is an awful place, but it is a deserving place for those who continue on the way of the wicked.

So, I must ask you, "Which path are you on? Which way are you on?" Now I realize I'm at Trinity Bible Church of Dallas, okay. This is like an all-star lineup in this room. But there's no way we could gather this many people together in one room and everyone is on the way of the righteous. We couldn't gather this many preachers together, this many missionaries together, and everyone is on the way of the righteous. I mean, Jesus had twelve, and one of them was a devil.

So I want to ask you, even as you find yourself here today at Trinity Bible Church of Dallas, have you been transplanted from the desert, from the barren land where you were dead in trespasses and sin? And there was nothing you could do to save yourself. You had no life. You had no ability whatsoever to rescue yourself. Has God come to you and uprooted you, and God, by His grace and by His mercy, has He ever transplanted you into His kingdom and grounded you in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ? This is something that must happen to you in order to be in the kingdom of God. I mean, Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say unto you, except a man is born again he shall not see the kingdom of God, he shall not enter the kingdom of God." Jesus said, "That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I say to you, 'You must be born again.'"



So the question is not, "Have you been transferred from one local church to another local church?" The question is not, "Have you been transferred from one state in the United States to another state, from one Bible study to another Bible study?" The question is, "Have you been uprooted from this evil world system, this kingdom of darkness, and have you been transported into the kingdom of light and be rooted and grounded now in the fertile soil of the Lord Jesus Christ? Are streams of water now flowing into your life and you've become a new person in Christ, and you're bearing fruit in every season of your life, and your leaf never withers?"

Admittedly, there are times when we're a little weak, and other times we're a little stronger; but this is true of every Christian. Is this your life? If you have never yet been born again, if you've never yet committed your life to Jesus Christ, this psalm is your psalm. This psalm is speaking to you. This psalm is pulling you away from the way of the wicked, that you would be on the way of the righteous, lest you perish, that you might have life and have it abundantly, that the blessing of God might rest upon your head and upon your soul.

So the issue is before you, the truth is presented to you. And I would assume most of you here today have been transplanted, but not everyone, and I wonder if you could be one of those here today who yet needs to have a personal encounter with the risen, living Jesus Christ, that you need to come to know Him, that you need to deny yourself and take up a cross and become a follower of Jesus Christ. You could make that commitment to the Lord today. You could bow the knee to Christ today. You could turn away from a life a selfish pursuit and sinful living and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. It says, "Him who comes unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

Come with childlike faith, and He will receive you. Today could be the greatest day in your life. In fact, today could be the day, the first day in your life that you really live and no longer have an empty, barren existence like this bush out in the desert. You could actually begin to thrive today. The whole issue is, "Will you commit your life to Jesus Christ?" May you do so today, even this very moment. Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, how we love You, how we worship You, how we adore You, that we once were cursed, and now we're blessed; we once were dead, and now we're alive; we once were in darkness, and now we walk in the light." Your blessing upon us is abundant, and we are so deeply grateful, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. [End]

I will conclude with the benediction: "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." God bless you.